

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE
		16 March 87
TO:		
C/ICCS, C/MOD, C/ESG		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
	28 3/17	
REMARKS:		
<p>This is a copy of an Eric Bowman memo to an internal BBC component explaining why he refuses to give BBC domestic TV the video product monitored off satellites. It indicates Bowman's good faith in giving materials to FBIS and thus supporting Internet.</p>		
FROM:		
C/Ops		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION

CONFIDENTIALINTERMET  
1-10P

FROM: General Manager, Monitoring Service

Room No. & 209 Caversham Park  
BuildingTel. 209  
No.

Date: 23rd May 1986

SUBJECT: TV SATELLITE RECEPTION : THE MS VIEW

TO: CCNS

Copies: Directorate, HRDMS

C/FEED  
FPI do

I promised you that on return from the FBIS Co-ordination meeting in Washington I would set out the view of the Monitoring Service on the question of reception of television transmissions by satellite. My reason for doing so is solely to appraise you of our own, and in your terms probably, limited position. I do not wish to appear as if I am attempting to dictate what is or is not possible by the Corporation in this field but I do have a responsibility to point out some of the implications.

Here at Caversham we have the facility, as you know, to monitor a considerable number of television transmissions by satellite. When the dishes were installed we had to be extremely careful to avoid any suggestion that the material monitored would be used in violation of the agreements underlying the Intelsat Consortium of which, of course, the BBC is a member. The immediate concern was that we would be seen to be bypassing the proper commercial and legal channels through which the supply of such material is normally arranged. That in itself could present problems for us if steps were taken to try to ban such interception. This would greatly hamper our operation as a news-gathering organisation for the BBC itself. It would seriously reduce our value as a source to our official consumers in Whitehall, and undermine our capacity to provide our partners, the FBIS (and through them the US Government), with the material they expect of us. A longer term and much greater problem would be if the programme suppliers or the satellite operators introduced encryption of their signals. The consequences of this for the Monitoring Service would be little short of catastrophic.

So our position is that if a Television News dish is used for reference and tip-offs only and if legally there is no objection to intercepting transmissions or point to point feeds then the MS operation would not be endangered. Obviously therefore we would require of our colleagues in the Television Service considerable restraint when faced with the obvious temptations of access to unique material.

.../

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

I very much appreciate the imperatives of the Television Service in needing access to the greatest number of sources. On the other hand, satellite transmissions are the Monitoring Service's sole means of access to foreign television programmes. I am therefore compelled to warn about any action which might imperil what for us is going to be an extremely important area of operations in the future.

(E.R. Bowman)

CONFIDENTIAL

pm